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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

WHY RELIGIÓN ?

By Abdus Salam Akhtar, M.A.

I have put a question in the beginning of this essay : Why religion ? and I ask, why not philosophy, why not politics, why not the sciences,—why only religion?

The World of Values.

Let us try to understand the question first. We are living today in the world of values, wherein we have values of all kinds,—the scientific values, the moral values, the social values and so on. All value of an action or a substance is judged by the standard or the purpose of that action or substance. If an act or a substance realizes the purpose for which it is designed, it may be said to have achieved its value or the end, and if it does not achieve its end, it will rightly be said to have lost its value, and will require to be amended, modified or redesigned. That is how the scientific system works, and the same is, more or less, true with regard to other systems, *e.g.* the moral or social systems. In any social structure, we must have the supreme end in view, before we actually chalk out details of administration to realize it. Similarly a moral act will be full of value if it realizes the purpose for which it is initiated.

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Science is a means not an end.

From the above it will be quite clear, that there is a difference between the means to an end, and the end itself. The "means", though inseparable from the end, rather inherent in the end itself, cannot and should not be identified with the end. The only error in modern times so far as the universality of science is concerned, has been to confuse the scientific resources and their utility with the purpose of creation or the end of life. The result is that life and its value are reduced to sceptical materialism and a disheartened attitude towards other fields of human knowledge, especially religion and ethics. In the spiritual realm, this error occurred in the later details of H ndu philosophy, when the 'Real' and the manifestation of the 'Real' were taken as one and the same thing. It is therefore of utmost importance, that the Supreme purpose or the end, should not be confused with anything other than itself:—لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له

> None other but the Supreme God alone deserves all worship and praise. He is One, and there is none who can claim partnership with Him.

Having clarified the difference between the means and the end, it now remains for us to see as to what should be our Supreme value or Purpose, and how should we try to attain it. It is needless to dewell on the qualifications of the Supreme Value, for evidently the Supreme Purpose must be supreme in every department of life, and of this life and that life, and in all times and circumstances. It should be permanent and universal, infallible and unchangeable, individual and common, personal as well as non-personal. It must be able to satisfy our intellectual quest, as well as our ethical and spiritual yearnings. It should give us laws to regulate our conduct, and furnish fields for all scientific activity. Above all, it must be able to answer any question arising from the social or political situation at all times.

With the above qualifications in view, it becomes apparent that science at best can serve only as a means and not an end in itself. By dint of its fundamentals

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it only explains and explores reality, and cannot set up an object to all kinds of human endeavour.

Sciences and Philosophy Combined.

It may be said that a philosophical outlook combined with scientific research may prove to be a good object for all human activities. For in philosophy, we have all the variegated conceptions of ethics and religion regarding reality, and perhaps can improve upon them as our scientific research goes on.

But it should be remembered, that what is required is not merely an 'outlook', but a series of regulations based on the eternal principles of finite-infinite relationship; the regulations for human conduct being unchangeable and true in all cases. Our readings in metaphysics, and in the histories of ethics and religion are essentially scientific, and are not meant to be a code of regulations for human conduct. All attempt in philosophy is an enquiry into the Real and is primarily a question of the intellect alone. We have already said that the Supreme Reality should be personal, as well as non-personal, which means that we should have personal contact with the Real, to serve as a guide or inspiration to our life; and the Real should be non-personal in the sense that it will not be subject to personality blemishes but will be free and common to all approaches of intellect. It is therefore clear that neither speculation nor the sciences can form a definite purpose or end for all human activities. They are indispensable, no doubt, for any developed society, but it will be an error to take them as an *end* to such society. Let us now see how religion gives us a data for life, and whether, by means of the resources offered by religion, we can gain the purpose which is inherent in our life.

Religion.

Religion has been usually looked upon in the speculative circles as a feeling-approach to the "Real", and therefore a sort of a "departmental" concern, presumably meant for those who are expert in rites and

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practices. That is hardly the truth about it. If carefully examined, religion is the only definite theory which has come down to us to present a reality which is in and through all our things and thoughts, and offers, above all, a possibility, whereby our ethical and spiritual yearnings find their full satisfaction. There is no question of "departmentalism" in religion. If God is the God of all, He has to be known by all, and worshipped by all. If He is the benefactor of the whole of mankind, then the whole of mankind must know how they are benefited by Him. Another point worth considering is, that religion is the only basic theory which offers a complete programme of life to all people at all times. No other conception in science or philosophy or in politics attempts a solution of the cultural or social complications in life as religion does. No other conception has formulated any regulations for individual or collective behaviour with reference to the supreme purpose in life. No other conception has promised a career of happiness and evolution in this life and in the life after death. And above all, none except religion has attempted to establish a relationship of the universal brotherhood of man in terms of the Supreme Purpose of life. In fact, religion on account of its practices in meditation and worship has created an exclusive habit of intuition and concentration in man, which has been responsible, in many cases, for new devices in scientific experimentations.

The Differences.

One word about the differences. It will be a pity to ignore a truth only on the ground that there are two opinions regarding its interpretation. We can hardly find a theory in science or philosophy or politics where there are no two opinions. On the contrary, science, and philosophy more than science, abounds with differences in details and even in fundamentals. But even to an ordinary observer, it will be clear, that the existence of differences, is a justification and not a disqualification, for the study of a particular theory or a principle. And the case is not different with religion. Here all the differences are solved by a true and a

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sincere effort on the part of the seeker himself. True devotion to truth knows no differences. God says in the Holy Quran : والذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا - عنكبوت ٧٤

Those who strive hard after Us, We certainly guide them to Our own paths.

Truth is its own security. To a true and sincere seeker, there is no deviation. There are no fears. He cannot be overtaken by interpretations. Study is only an intimacy with the preliminaries. True study begins with individual effort and absorption. The more you strive, the richer is your study. God is not a conclusion of an argument, nor a result of the logical analysis. He is to be attained by an effort of the mind, by services and sacrifice, by penances and prayers. Differences therefore do not count at all.

Religion, therefore, occupies its own place in individual as well as collective life. But it may be asked, whether religion, in the broad sense of the term, is to be taken as means to an end or an end in itself. In this connection, it should be noted that religion aims at the establishment of a twofold relation *i.e.* the relation of man to God, and the relation of man to man. As God is the ultimate object of realization, and it is He who is the foundation of all our social and political institutions, it is to Him that all our energies are directed, in the first instance. Religion is a pathway from man to God; a course of action upon which the finite can reach the Infinite. It is through Him that we know other things. He is all in all including ourselves; He is the beginning and the end simultaneously. As a matter of fact there is no independent 'other', for all distinctions refer to time and space, which are characteristics of our finitude. Metaphysically speaking, my 'self' is already united in bondage to the 'Supreme Self' or God, it is the purification which is religion. The stream has to make its way on the plains before it meets the sea. The seed has to be sown and watered before it turns into flowers. The seed is potentially a flower just as a stream of water, by nature of the water itself, is capable of meeting the sea. Religion is therefore an introduction

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of the finite self to the Infinite self by purifying the finite self. It is a means to the end.

Another question before we end. It may be asked that, by virtue of the religious process, a stage may arrive where we might dispense with religion itself. For the boat is not required when the coast is reached; and the sick need not stay in the hospital when restored to health.

Now, the above argument hardly applies to religion. The spiritual process is not like a chemical process which ends with the preparation of a required substance. When God is the beginning as well as the end, there is no termination anywhere. In progress there is no finality. The experiences of today become a data for tomorrow; and the history of one nation serves as a background for another. Life is a series of experiences, each improving upon the other, and each making way for the next. There is no break but continuity, which is a life process in all lives. The error in the above argument seems to have arisen from the ambiguity of the word "End". End does not mean terminus. It means the centre of activity, the object of an action, the goal of an effort. It is possible that when one 'end' is reached, it may lead to another. Life, thus, will be a series of purposes, each purpose when fulfilled making way for a greater purpose, and then for a still greater purpose. This is what we term as evolution, and as it is essential everywhere in the physical world, it is also essential in the spiritual world.

We have seen now that religion is the life force for all kinds of activity because it alone shows the link between the Supreme Purpose of life and the life itself. No life will acquire any meaning unless it is linked with the Supreme Purpose of life itself. All regulations of conduct and state are a means to the realization of the Supreme Purpose which is inherent in creation. May all be able to realize it.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

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BY MUHAMMAD TUFAIL NAZ, M.A.

There come moments in our life, when we feel tempted to ask two fundamental questions about our existence which, if answered properly, may go a long way to solve the riddle of life. In the first place, we feel an urge to know what is this life, the intensity of the urge depending upon the circumstances of our life ; and secondly we are often compelled to ask ourselves why do we live. This is tantamount to saying that, human intellect, however undeveloped it may be, craves to know the origin and object of life. If this craving is legitimate, and so it is, it need not be suppressed.

Much thought has been devoted to the origin of life, and both philosophers and scientists have arrived at certain conclusions which seem to have won universal recognition. But the other aspect of life has been practically ignored. Very little has been said about the object of life and even that has failed to find favour, probably because the so-called intellectual giants, who influence human thought, are either reticent about this aspect of life or because they are the exponents of views which cannot be combined and reduced to an acceptable theory. Sceince seems to have no concern with this problem and philosophy, too as long as it pursues the path indicated by science, cannot reach the necessary goal. Our distrust in science and philosophy must persuade us to seek the guidance of religion, but in an age where scientific thought has reached its triumph, religion is not supposed to be a safe guide. How is then the question to be answered ? We who live have a right to ask why do we live. Life must have some purpose, otherwise it is without charm and without significance.

Now, it is a commonplace truth that when we do not know the use of a thing, we are liable to

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misuse it, causing thereby destruction of the thing itself. So it is with life. It is a pity that human beings, the best of God's creation, who are endowed with mind, that is capable of thinking and knowing what is good and what is bad, should be so ignorant of the purpose of life, as to put it to wrong use or no use, and in so doing, try to defeat the object of creation when fulfilment is the only duty assigned to them. It is this ignorance that is responsible for the wastage of life especially in those countries where, in the absence of religion, science and philosophy alone control human activities.

In a society that is steeped in materialism and when a materialistic conception of life prevails, the purpose of life cannot be other than the preservation of life itself, which is far from being laudable, as it signifies nothing, rather gives rise to the question, why should we preserve life, which is precisely a repition of the question in hand. It is generally said that life should be preserved for the continuance of the human race, but here too we are confronted with the question which we have to face while considering the life of an individual. The human race, or a group of individuals for which any name may be devised, too, must strive for the realization of some object. The entire human race is divided into nations and communities, each nation and each community being an entity and having an ideal before it, which keeps its members active and inspires deeds which demonstrate its strength and determination to live. The ideal in all the cases is the same. The function of a state is to preserve the life of individuals and to promote their happiness and it is obvious that life must be preserved and its happiness promoted so that the individuals may, in security and with ease, achieve the ideal, which they have before them as individuals. An impartial student of humanity may feel inclined to blame a state for its ideal which aims at nothing except the preservation of life. Just as an individual struggles to maintain life for the achievement of something, similarly a state must exist to achieve something that is quite different from what we call the preservation

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of life and the promotion of happiness. The ideals in the case of an individual and that of a state must be identical. A state must not only constantly remind the individuals of the purpose for which they are created, but also provide facilities for the fulfilment of that purpose. Such a policy of the state alone can maintain peace and produce individuals, who, living in perfect security, can think of the object of their creation and who, under the supervision and encouragement of the state, may find it easy to achieve what is beyond their reach otherwise.

It is not the state alone that is to be blamed. The individuals too suffer from the same disability, very probably because they have no ideals to strive for, other than those which a state encourages them to formulate. How many there are among us who, when asked why do they live, would not say that they live so that they may earn for themselves and for those who depend upon them for the maintenance of their life? Thus even in the case of an individual the motive of life is the same *viz.*, to maintain life and to make it as happy as possible. Men with higher conception of life cannot give credit to such a view of life. Even those who are so tied down to this material earth as to set conventional values on life, forgetting altogether that life has its source elsewhere, would call it an offending selfishness to live merely for the sake of living and making oneself happy. They would say, we live to serve others and to discharge the duties we owe to other persons who, living among us, need our help and guidance. The idea of social service is a noble one and those who are inspired by it really do something useful in the world. But everybody is not fit for social service and those who are, don't believe that social service is good in itself. They think that it is a means to some end and the end, whatever it may be, must be achieved. Clearly then, we cannot justify our existence by attributing such motives to life. The preservation of life must be for some purpose, social service too must have some end, wealth too must be accumulated for a purpose other than mere happiness which is seldom a privilege of the rich.

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No one can deny the truth that this confusion about the purpose of life is traceable to the conception of life which science and modern philosophy have popularized and that so long as life is interpreted in terms of materialism, there can be no solid ground for believing in higher values of life. This tendency of mind is doing incalculable mischief in the world and may continue doing so unless some counter forces are brought into operation to impede its progress. It is also a point to be noted that this faulty conception of life has, by encouraging silence about the purpose of life, engendered disgust for life, which appears to many of us a burden, "a tale told by an idiot' or 'a long headache in a noisy street'. Why should those find splendour in life who live to be happy but are unhappy, who live to love others but are hated in return, who try their utmost to preserve life but do not succeed ?

This inevitably leads us to the conclusion that we live for some higher purpose which is not known to the scientists and the philosophers and that if we are anxious to understand the so-called mystery of life we should not knock at their doors, but should listen to the words of those who have a direct communion with the Creator of all life. It does not appear reasonable to believe that the Creator of life, whatever name we may give Him, is silent as to the object of creation. He must have declared it in an articulate voice. This necessitates belief in revealed religions and this belief, if sincere, will solve the riddle of life. The Holy Scripts throw a flood of light on the problem of creation and the explanation given therein has as strong a claim on our attention and thought as the theories put forth in books on philosophy and science. These books tell us that God has created man with a definite purpose for whose realization he is to strive throughout his life. We gather from the Holy Quran that man has been created so that he may worship God and attain that perfection which neither material prosperity nor social prestige can confer upon him. The word worship is likely to be misinterpreted and many have, by putting wrong interpretation on this

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word, gave so far as not only to doubt the existence of God, but also to scoff at the idea of creation. Unfortunately, such men, for lack of understanding, have come to believe that worship merely means the praise of God. Really, there is no sense in creating man for worship if worship is only the adoration of God. But those who understand the significance of worship and the object it serves, will find nobility in the purpose for which man has been created. The Creator of man has endowed him with faculties which he can develop to their utmost and worship is one of the means for their development. Just as intellectual exercise is necessary for the development of intellect and physical exercise for the development of body, similarly some sort of exercise is required for spiritual development. The worship of God serves this purpose and it enables a man to acquire those spiritual qualities and attain that perfection which bring him nearer God, nay make him God-like. The Divine in man cannot be imprisoned, it is constantly in revolt against earthly limitation which interrupts its progress towards its goal. Man, however evil-natured he may be, yearns for something unconsciously, and feels discontented even when he seems to lead a life of perfect happiness. That yearning is for spiritual progress, for perfection and approach to God, with the soul as his driving force, and unless that yearning is gratified there is no rest for him. God, the Creator of man, has given man infinite capacity for progress. He is not even debarred from acquiring Divine attributes; it is rather the object of his life to cultivate them till he becomes God-like and merges into Him, so to say.

Life is worth living only when we ascribe such purpose to it and there is no sin in doing so especially when the Creator of life Himself speaks of it in unambiguous words. The mystery of life is impenetrable, we try to understand it reposing confidence in science and philosophy, but find ourselves in the grip of confusion from which there is no escape. When science and philosophy forsake us, Revelation comes to our aid with an account of man's life that is adequate and that cannot fail to commend itself to the reason and the conscience.

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Mr. S. M. U. SHAH'S FAREWELL PARTY.

On Friday, 4th August, 1944, a farewell Tea Party was given by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, Nairobi, in honour of their Ameer in Kenya, Mr. S. M. U. Shah, at the Blue Room Restaurant. Many prominent citizens of Nairobi were present at the function, among whom were H. W. the Mayor of Nairobi, Councillor E. A. Vasey, and the Commissioner of Police.

Towards the close of the function several short speeches were delivered. The first one was by Mr. A. Mustafa who spoke as follows:—

" Your Worship, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I will say a few words, I really mean a few words, on this occasion. In the first place I wish to offer sincere thanks on behalf of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to our guests to-day who have been kind enough to spare their valuable time to come to this party.

Mr. Shah, as you are all aware, is the local head of our Community in Kenya and will shortly be proceeding to India on retirement.

I do not propose to take up any time on Mr. Shah's activities in Kenya during his stay here. But to one important aspect I wish to refer very briefly because this provides the background to his public actions. Our Community claims to be based solely on the Holy Quran, and the tenets of our faith and the principles of our conduct are governed by the Book revealed to the Holy Prophet Mohammed. Our religious head in India, in our view, is the repository of that Divine Dispensation for the present day, and like the master Prophet in whose footsteps he follows, is the recipient of Divine revelations, and is, in short, the medium of contact between God and the world. Now that sounds pretty tall, but the extreme brevity in which I have summed up our religious basis tends naturally to a slight distortion of the whole per-

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spective. With this reservation that, in a nutshell, is our faith.

Now we, who accept the claims of our religious head and master, accept him unconditionally, for he claims not on his own account, but on account of God's command, and he is but the manifestation of the teachings and the injunctions of the Holy Quran, which of course binds him as much as it binds us.

So from decisions and policies which he has laid down, we cannot, so long as we remain Ahmadie Muslims, deviate is the slightest degree. One such declaration, which, of course, is based on Islamic teachings, is that every Ahmadie must, as a matter of faith, actively co-operate with whatever Government, foreign or otherwise, he may be living under and that he must only use constitutional means to attain his ends. From that course of conduct, no Ahmadie wherever he be, in Asia or Europe or Africa, and incidentally there are Ahmadies in every quarter of the globe, will ever dare to deflect.

I will be frank, and freely admit that quite a number of us, especially among the younger generations, feel, on many occasions, this injunction to be well-nigh intolerable. The feverish, narrow and arrogant nationalistic conception prevalent today, has unfortunately, I am afraid, caught our imagination as much as it has caught that of other Communities and nations. You are all aware how India today is seething with turmoil in the political arena. And you are further aware that the intellegentsia are the backbone of that disturbance. And the Ahmadiyya Community is the only Community in India which can boast of practically 100% literacy. So it is natural that the impact of this violent sense of national pride is strongest on our Community. And yet, this is a matter on record that this Community, while commended by the Indian Government as loyal, is also looked at askance by some government officials ; and it is condemned as a toadying and renegade community, as something in the nature of a quisling organisation, by the rest of the freedom-loving Indians. This state of affairs has driven some feeble-hearted members from our Community and in fact to

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take an example nearer home, a very prominent Indian public man of Kenya has affirmed that he has left our Community purely on the ground that he cannot reconcile his urge for a free India with that duty of active co-operation with the Government and the policy of employing only constitutional means to attain political ends required of every Ahmadie.

We Ahmadie Muslims, who follow this injunction of our master, follow it without reference to our personal inclinations ; indeed in a number of cases, we follow it against our most considered convictions. Perhaps the explanation of this anomaly will be found if you realise that the injunction has a religious basis, and unless we repudiate the very character of our master's mission, we cannot but subserve our convictions to his instructions.

And so it is that we Ahmadies here as well as in India occupy a very unenviable position, because both the Government and the public, quite understandably, doubt our bonafides, when we talk of and practise co-operation with the Government. They fail to realise the spring, and the nature of the source of this attitude of ours.

If therefore Mr. Shah's public activities were viewed against that background, and the substratum of his advocacy of co-operation with the Government realised and appreciated, it is certain that the suspicion with which many an intelligent man regard our Community will be dispelled.

In the end, I wish to remark that Mr. Shah, in spite of the opposition which his public actions provoke, for reasons I have stated, is held, through sheer personal magnetism, in high regard among other Communities and races, and I believe his departure from Kenya will be felt as a loss by them as well."

He was followed by H. W. the Mayor. Councillor E. A. Vasey said, " It gives me great pleasure to be here this afternoon. I heartily endorse the last speaker's good wishes to Mr. Shah and his wife and family on his impending departure. I believe Mr. Shah is leaving us for good. I would ask Mr. Shah to remember

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us as we certainly will remember him and cherish the ties of association contracted during his stay in this Colony. I hope Mr. Shah will forget our occasional differences of opinion and that he will carry pleasant memories of Kenya with him in his retirement.

" At the beginning of the war, I was associated with the Indian Branch of the Information Office. Things were anything but rosy those days. We were going through hard times indeed. During that period I found that there was one community to which I could invariably look for assistance.

" I never failed to find it whenever I turned to that quarter. The support from Mr. Shah and his community was unstinted ; and I am very glad I have the opportunity to-day, which I had not before this, of saying publicly and in a representative character to Mr. Shah and his whole community, " Thank you ". That assistance given so timely had been a great help in those dark days when the very existence of Britain and her Empire was at stake.

" The real test, I believe, of the worth of any community, lies, eventually in the qualities of its leaders. The Ahmadiyya Community, in this respect, need fear no judgment. Its leadership provides a refreshing and invigorating example of a sound and fearless approach to thorny problems, underneath which runs the vein of utter sincerity and deep earnestness."

Turning to Mr. Shah, his Worship continued, " Mr. Shah, you will shortly be leaving us. I wish you and your's good luck and Godspeed. I hope you will accept, in the spirit in which I tender them, very sincere thanks on your behalf and on behalf of your community, for the invaluable help which has never been withheld whenever required in the interests of the public. I hope you will, when in India, continue to remember us ; we will remember you, and carry on the good work which you have been doing here."

Mr. Shah in a brief reply began with the recitation of a portion from the Holy Quran. The verses he chose

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for his context كنتم اعداء فالف بين قلوبكم فاصبحتم منعمته اخوانا were :

After giving the translation of the above, he said, "This miracle of love among the followers of Islam was given to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be upon him) thirteen hundred years ago. Now again the world has witnessed the same miracle among the followers of Hazrat Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah. We, Ahmadies, have deep love for one another. If one suffers pain, all Ahmadies, in every part of the world, suffer pain likewise and help that brother with ceaseless prayers. As soon as we come to know that an Ahmadie is in affliction in China, we living in other parts of the world feel sorely afflicted.

"To-day Hazrat Amirul-momineen, the Holy Head of the Ahmadiyya Community at Qadian is the shadow of God on earth. Through him God manifests His will and His pleasure. Our faith and belief in God have increased ever since the outbreak of this war. God foretold our Holy Head in clear visions and inspirations, the major issues and the principal events of this war long before they took place.

"Millions of people, among whom is the former Viceroy of India, can bear witness to these prophesies. We were told beforehand that England would one day be in a bad plight, forsaken and deserted by her Allies, France and Belgium. It was then that the heart of our Holy Head was deeply touched. At the outbreak of the war he exhorted us to pray wholeheartedly for the victory of Britain and her Allies. But when God told him of England's impending predicament, he began to pray for long hours at a stretch. Once when he was travelling in a train, his emotions were so much worked that he prayed for the victory of the British arms all night long. Towards the small hours of the morning he was shown a king and he heard the voice "abdicated". Very soon after, the world heard of the collapse of Belgium and the abdication of her king. Before America joined the war on the side of England, in answer to his prayers, God told him of that eventuality to hearten and encourage him.

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" In the same way, there are many events which were foretold him by God.

" Only yesterday ", continued Mr. Shah, " we heard that Turkey had severed her political and economic relations from Germany. But about a year and a half ago, God Almighty showed our Head a vision in which this event was described. We were expecting it.

" Today, God has chosen our Holy Head for the manifestation of his will. He hears his prayers." Mr. Shah urged his audience to write to him whenever they were in need of divine help. His prayers would certainly be efficacious.

In the end, Mr. Shah said, " I have endeavoured to carry out the sacred injunctions of our Holy Head both in the letter and spirit. I undersand more than others here in this country the purport of his exhortations and commandments. I have always tried my utmost to enforce his orders to the best of my ability and capacity. Sometimes, I had to rebuke and scold some of my brothren who had gone astray or who had violated religious discipline and I must admit none of them took offence as they were fully aware that I was solicitous of their spiritual well-being and that I was simply executing the expressed wishes of our Holy Head.

" Before I sit down ", said Mr. Shah, " I thank His Worship the Mayor, for his kind remarks and his good wishes. I also thank the guests who have honoured me by their presence this evening. God bless you all."

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PROPHET DAY MEETINGS

At Calcutta

The 17th Annual Prophet Day Meeting organised under the auspices of the Ahmadiyya Association was held at 4 p.m. on Sunday, the 5th November, 1944, at Wellington Square. Mr. Anandi Lal Poddar, Mayor of Calcutta, presided.

In the course of his inaugural speech, Maulvi Abu Mohammad Husamuddin Haider, B.A., Retired Deputy Magistrate, explained the aims and objects of the meeting and stated that the present leader of the Ahmadiyya Community, Hazrat Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmed inaugurated the Prophet Day Meetings and All Prophets Day Meetings to foster a spirit of mutual understanding and religious toleration among Muslims and non-Muslims.

Alhaj Maulana Mohammad Salim, Ahmadi Missionary, formerly, of the Near and Middle East, in course of a stirring address stated how the Holy Prophet's teachings resulted in elevation in the status of women who were formerly treated as mere chattels and were actually distributed by heirs as inheritance. The abolition of slavery and prevention of drinking of alcoholic liquor were two other achievements of the Holy Prophet. The slaves freed by the Holy Prophet were given the same status as free members of the community enjoyed. The astonishing success by which drinking was abolished in Arabia overnight by the Holy Prophet is a matter of history not yet achieved in any other country up to the present time.

Speaking on behalf of the Ram Krishna Mission, Swami Sundarananda, Editor, 'Udbodhan', stressed the beauties of the teachings of the Holy Prophet and said that the followers of Ram Krishana regarded all Prophets and Avatars as true messengers of God, as Ram Krishna, the founder of their organisation, himself came to the conclusion after actual experiment that all religions were true.

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Chowdhury Abdullah Khan of Tatanagar in course of his speech pointed out the teachings of the Prophet requiring all Muslims to believe in not only the Holy Prophet Mohammad but also all the Prophets, Avatars, Rishis, such as Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Buddha and others —a principle which was absolutely essential to establish interr-eligious toleration and good-will.

Babu Suhrid Krishna Basu, Jyotirbhusan, F.T.S., associated himself with the tributes paid to the Great Prophet of Islam and stated that the message of brotherhood preached by the Holy Prophet of Islam was unique in the annals of history.

Mr. Ardeshir Dinshaw, B.E., congratulated the Ahmadiyya community for having given this annual opportunity to members of different faiths to assemble on a common platform and pay tributes to the Holy Prophet.

Mr. Daulat Ahmed Khan Khadim, B.L., Secretary, Calcutta Ahmadiyya Association, pointed out that it was the teachings of the Holy Prophet on international peace and social and economic justice which alone could bring about a lasting peace in the world. The League of Nations failed because of the disregard of the wholesome principle enunciated by the Holy Prophet that an aggressor nation must be opposed by all other nations till it submitted to a just settlement of the issues in dispute.

The Mayor of Calcutta, Mr. Anandi Lal Poddar, in his presidential speech remarked that the Ahmadiyya Community had started a right thing at the right moment by inaugurating such meetings that would foster unity and fellow-feeling among the diverse people of this country. He exhorted the people to remember the lesson of such meetings and cultivate the same.

Continuing, the President said that all religions taught truthfulness, honesty etc. whereas no religion taught one to commit theft, adultery or tell lies etc. If only the followers of different religions practised the principles of their respective religions there would have been an end of all our troubles.

The meeting was attended by a large and distin-

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guished audience and terminated at about 6-30 p.m. It was a great success.

At Lucknow

The "Seerat-un-Nabi" was celebrated on Sunday night in the Ganga Pershad Hall before a distinguished gathering by the local Ahamadiya Community. Dr. Wahid Mirza took the chair.

The meeting was addressed by Dr. Radha Kumud Mukerjee, Dr. S. K. Banerjee, Dr. Manjit Singh, Maulana Zahur Hussain and Mr. Wali Kamal.

Dr. Manjit Singh described the circumstances in which the Prophet preached the Gospel of one God.

Maulana Zahur Hassain briefly described his life and teachings.

Dr. S.K. Banerjee of the Lucknow University gave a vivid description of the achievement of the Prophet of God, of whom he was a great admirer, in spite of the fact that he professed a different religion. One could not but be struck by the wonder vigour with which he fulfilled his dream of the future greatness of the desert of Arabia. It was under the hardest of circumstances that he preached his message of unity, equality and brotherhood, which subsequently led to huge reforms, and laid the foundation of the democratic and national outlook of Mussalmans. "Worship none but the Almighty," said he. He was truly the messenger of God, a unique leader, and a statesman, and a great friend of humanity. Dr. Banerjee laid special stress on Muhammad's peaceful and persuasive methods.

Dr. Radha Kumud's Speech.

Dr. Radha Kumud Mukerjee described the achievement of the Prophet in soul-stirring words which kept the audience spell-bound.

Describing the Prophet of Islam as an immortal among the mortals, he said Muhammad was born as a man among men and achieved the highest against the overwhelming odds of prevailing circumstances of igno-

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rance, prejudice and superstitions and it was thus that he evolved the inner qualities of his super-human achievement, in the midst of insurmountable difficulties. "I am the messenger of God," said he and gave to the world his message of universal brotherhood.

Continuing, Dr. Mukerjee laid special stress on the Prophet's scrupulous justice and unbending austerity. He was prepared to lay down his life for the sake of truth. He achieved the highest enlightenment by sheer force of truth and conviction.

He was the greatest Apostle of truth that the world has ever produced.

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